

Message Text

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ACTION AF-18

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FM AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3534

INFO AMCONSUL DURBAN

AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

USUN NEW YORK 814

C O N F I D E N T I A L CAPE TOWN 0460

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, PINT, PFOR, RH, UK

SUBJ: RHODESIAN SETTLEMENT PROSPECTS SEEM DIMMER

PRETORIA ALSO FOR FLOWERREE.

1. REMARKS MADE AT RHODESIAN PARLIAMENT OPENING JUNE 14 BY
PRESIDENT

CLIFFORD DUPONT ARE BEING INTERPRETED IN SOUTH AFRICAN PRESS AS
FURTHER DIMMING HOPES FOR SETTLEMENT WITH BRITAIN. BRITISH EMBASSY
OFFICERS HOWEVER ARE MORE EQUIVOCAL AS TO MEANING OF SPEECH.

2. DUPONT STATED THAT ENDING OF CONSTITUTIONAL DISPUTE WITH HMG
THROUGH THE 1971 AGREEMENT REMAINED AN IMPORTANT OBJECTIVE OF
RHODESIAN GOVERNMENT. HOWEVER HE WENT ON TO SAY THAT " IT HAS
RECENTLY

BECOME OBVIOUS THAT, BECAUSE OF POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC
CONSIDERATIONS

UNRELATED TO RHODESIA, THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT NO LONGER HAS THE
SAME DETERMINATION TO RESOLVE THE ISSUE THAT WAS EVIDENT WHEN
THE AGREEMENT WAS SIGNED IN NOVEMBER 1971. IT IS NECESSARY THAT
THE PEOPLE OF RHODESIA SHOULD TAKE NOTE OF THIS ASSESSMENT,
BECAUSE THERE ARE DISADVANTAGES INHERENT IN PROLONGED UNCERTAINTY
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ABOUT A SETTLEMENT. IF THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT IS NOT PREPARED TO IMPLEMENT THE PROPOSALS, MY GOVERNMENT BELIEVES THAT THE PEOPLE OF RHODESIA MUST RECONCILE THEMSELVES TO THIS POSITION."

3. PRESS HAS INTERPRETED ABOVE AND REMARKS BY MINISTER OF LANDS MARK PARTRIDGE AS SIGN CABINET IS PREPARING RHODESIANS FOR THE WORST. PARTRIDGE EARLIER LAST WEEK SEEMED TO RULE OUT RHODESIAN GOVERNMENT TALKS WITH ANC WHEN HE SAID, IN CLEAR REFERENCE TO ANC HEAD BISHOP MUZOREWA, THAT IT WAS " QUITE RIDICULOUS THAT SOME LITTLE- KNOWN CLERICAL GENTLEMEN SHOULD HAVE SPRUNG TO SUCH PROMINENCE IN SO SHORT A TIME AND SHOULD BE REPRESENTED AS SPEAKING FOR THE AFRICAN MASSES". PARTRIDGE ADDED THAT RHODESIA COULD NOT CONTINUE INDEFINITELY UNDER UNCERTAINTY. IF THERE WAS NO SETTLEMENT THE COUNTRY MUST ACCEPT THAT AND CONTINUE TO SOLDIER ON.

4. DURING CONVERSATIONS IN CAPE TOWN JUNE 18 BETWEEN LONDON EMBOFF FLOWERREE AND CONGEN WITH BRITISH AMBASSADOR BOTTOMLEY AND OTHER BRITISH EMBOFFS, LATTER ALL TOOK MORE CAUTIOUS POSITION AS TO MEANING OF RHODESIAN DEVELOPMENTS. BRITISH MINISTER SAW DUPONT SPEECH AS BELATED RECOGNITION BY RHODESIANS THAT BRITISH WOULD NOT PRESSURE RHODESIAN AFRICANS TO ACCEPT 1971 SETTLEMENT PROPOSALS WHEREAS UP UNTIL RECENTLY SMITH REGIME HAD, AT LEAST IN BRITISH VIEW, EVIDENTLY COUNTED ON BRITISH SUPPORT IN THIS RESPECT. IN LATER CONVERSATION AMBASSADOR SIMPLY DISMISSED SPEECH AS TYPICAL OF DUPONT WHO " NEVER HAS SUPPORTED A SETTLEMENT". OUR NET IMPRESSION WAS THAT BRITISH HERE, WHILE STRESSING THEY WERE NOT FULLY UP- TO- DATE ON DEVELOPMENTS, HAVE NOT YET RULED OUT POSSIBILITY OF A SETTLEMENT.
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